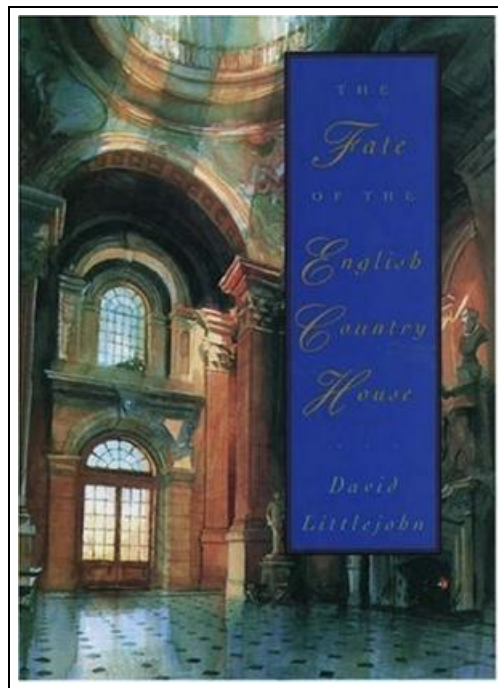


The Fate of the English Country House



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THE FATE OF THE ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE

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Oxford University Press. Hardcover. Condition: New. 360 pages. Dimensions: 10.0in. x 7.2in. x 1.1in. For millions of people in the English-speaking world, the now standard image of the British country house is Brideshead Castle in Wiltshire: the domed and doomed baroque country seat of the Marchmain family seen in the BBC adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Brideshead Revisited*. In real life, the house used for the television series is Castle Howard, one of the largest and most opulent private homes in England, located on 10,000 acres of gardens, parkland, and woods in North Yorkshire, now visited by more than 200,000 tourists a year. Between 3,500 and 4,000 country houses—large, often elegantly furnished and surrounded by extensive estates—remain more or less intact in England today, although frequently converted to non-residential uses. Whether in public or private hands, the best known of them have become a major magnet for British and foreign tourists, attracting about 20 million paying visitors each year. Country houses, with their furnishings and landscaped settings, have been called England's one important contribution to art history. They figure prominently in the ongoing debate over how much of any National Heritage is worth preserving. In *The Fate of the English Country House*, David Littlejohn describes the past glories and troubled present condition of the stately homes of England, both those that continue to serve as private houses, and those that have been turned into museums, tourist attractions, convention centers, hotels, country clubs, schools, apartments, hospitals, even prisons. By means of extensive conversations with their owners and managers (the book contains more than 50 photographs of the houses), the author takes us on a private tour of these remarkable places and evaluates the many proposals that have been put forward for their survival. In the opening chapter we...

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